(a) whether the Chambers of Commerce and Industry have urged Government to have an early trade pact with Singapore;

(b) whether a two day summit was organised by the Singapore Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in association with the Mumbai based Indian Merchant's Chamber;

(c) if so, whether India and Singapore have signed a trade agreement; and

(d) if so, what are their aims and objects and to what extent this would be helpful for both?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Indian Merchant's Chamber, Mumbai had in association with Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry organised 'India Calling Asia-Pacific Business Summit' in Singapore from 9-10th July, 2004 with the objective of harnessing business opportunities not only in India but in the Asia Pacific Region and to look at investment potential of overseas Indians and foreign investors. While there has not been any specific proposal frpm the Chamber of Commerce & Industry for having an early trade pact with Singapore, the summary of the proceedings makes a mention of a recommendation to expedite signing of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement for the mutual benefit of India and Singapore.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The question does not arise.

Trade ties with Israel

1942. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and 16 other organisations have urged Government to improve trade links with Israel;

(b) if so, the trade between India and Israel between 2002-03;

(c) to what extent the FICCI wants to further increase it;

(d) whether FICCI and various organisations have signed MoUs for cooperation with various organisations and manufacturers association of Israel; and

(e) if so, to what extent India and Israel have signed agreement to improve the trade during 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) has reported that trade relations between India and Israel are being improved by exchange of business delegations for enhancing cooperation, tie-ups and joint ventures. The total trade between India and Israel in 2002-03 was worth US$ 1.237 billion, which increased to US$ 1.393 billion in 2003-04. FICCI envisages a two-fold increase in bilateral trade in the next couple of years.

(d) and (e) Government is aware that various Indian trade and industry bodies have signed MoUs with their counterpart organisations in Israel from time to time. However, no information is available about such MoUs having been signed specifically for bilateral trade promotion during 2004-05.

Import of medical equipments

1943. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of misuse of the ten-year limit rule by importers of refurbished medical equipment wherein obsolete and outdated equipment is being imported and released from the cargo terminals at Delhi, IGI Airport and Mumbai Airport;

(b) whether there has been a sharp upsurge in imports of outdated and obsolete video processors and endoscopes during the last four months through under invoicing and submission of fake chartered engineers certificates;

(c) the steps being taken to verify the actual date of manufacture by cross checking with the authorized dealers of such companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?